

An Assessment on the Impact of Leadership Self-Efficacy on Directive Leadership Behavior in Nigeria Commercial Banks

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Abstract

The main aim of this study is to assess the impact of leadership self-efficacy on directive leadership behavior in organizations. The study utilizes the self-efficacy theory as theoretical underpinning. The study uses a quantitative method of data collection with the use of questionnaire. 1000 questionnaires were administered on branch managers of some commercial Banks. 457 questionnaires were considered for the analysis. In this study, several statistical methods were used to analyze the data collected. The component factor analysis, reliability test of the measurements and multiple regression analysis were conducted in the study. The study is significant to the self-efficacy theory. Furthermore, the development of hypothesis is also one of the significance of this study.

Keywords: Leadership Self-efficacy, Directive Leadership Behavior

INTRODUCTION

As a result of the competitive nature of the business environment, organizations of all sizes need the right kind of leadership in order to survive. Those organizations that are privileged to have effective leaders have the ability to innovate, have the capacity to respond to the market and environmental changes; they are creative in addressing challenges and able to sustain higher performance (Vardiman et al., 2006; Amagoh, 2009). Effective leadership within an organization is often viewed as the foundation of organizational performance and growth (Bass, 1960; Kartz & Khan, 1966; Yukl, 1998; Vardinaan, Houghton & Jinkerson, 2006) hence, organizations that fail to have effective leadership may likely fail to meet performance expectation. It is evident from previous research that leadership (at individual, group or organizational levels) is very important in helping an individual, group or organization to achieve the goals (Mat, 2008).

Lawal and Chukwuebuka (2007) observed that the extent to which several members of the organization put in their influence and ability in their disposal for the effective utilization of their scarce resources, depends to a large extent on the ability of the leaders and how they (leaders) understand and perform their managerial jobs. Thus the impact people have in leadership position is undoubtedly great as their actions and effective managerial performance usually goes a long way in determining the organizations performance to some larger extent (Giesner et al., 2009). Yukl (2008) observed that, effective performance of today's organizations depends on the ability of an organization to perform its stated objectives and mission, so as to maintain its favorable earnings and sustain the value of its assets. The leader is now expected to play a crucial role to achieve this based (Lawal & Chukwuebuka, 2007). Consequently however, Leaders in various organisations around the world are today facing numerous challenges as they are regularly struggling to adapt to the accelerating changes in their organisations which is both internally and externally embedded in the environment (Avolio & Luthans, 2006; Hooijberg, Hunt, & Dodge, 1997; Lord & Hall, 2005; Hannah, Avolio, Luthans & Harns 2008). In this period of economic realities, most organizational

leaders were left in dilemma as they are engaged in handling the realities of today's business environment (Luthans, Wyk & Wulumbwa, 2004). This situation not only challenges the leaders' ability, their skills or knowledge but even questions their capabilities of leading their organisation or the psychological resources needed in meeting the ever accelerating demands of their managerial roles. Tsui and Ashford (1994) pointed out that organisations and managers working in them are faced with several daunting realities. These realities sometimes direct organisations into the idea of downsizing, restructuring, mergers and retooling, with striking frequency, in response to the more turbulent, competitive and rapid advancements in the global market place.

As a result of the central position leaders occupy within the context of the group's they belong, they are directly associated with the overall performance of the said group or team, and by extension their organization, based on the contribution they offer in their managerial role (Lord & Maher, 1991; Phillips & Lord, 1981; Giessner, Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2009). Hence it is not surprising that the manner in which various companies that compete and attain sustainable growth or level of performance around the world are directly or often attributed to the quality of leaders in the said organization (Sarros & Santora, 1994).

However, traits such as self-efficacy and high expectations are regularly given consideration by theorist especially in relation to effective leadership issues (House & Shamir, 1993; Chemers, 2001). Self-efficacy can be said to be particularly salient in a crisis situation as it is seen as a person's overall estimate of his/her ability to achieve requisite performance in achievement situations (Schunk, 1983; Eden & Zuk, 1995; Ross & Gray, 2006). Bandura (1997) in a review, found that self-efficacy was found to influence several forms of performance i.e. academic achievement, athletic performance, career choice, drug and alcohol abstinence, entrepreneurship, decision-making, organizational functioning, stress tolerance and teaching performance (e.g. Holden, 1991; Multon et al., 1991; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership Self-efficacy (LSE)

Over the past decade, the concept of self-efficacy is one area that has been receiving tremendous attention in organisational research (Chen & Blisse, 2002; Paglis, 2010). Several researches on self-efficacy have widely revealed how the motivational construct of self-efficacy influences the choice of activities, the stated and level of the goals set, efforts and persistence towards the task to be accomplished and the subsequent performance (Bandura & Wood, 1989; Chemers, 2001). Hence, the term self-efficacy plays a vital role in influencing the skills individuals possess and also what they do with the skills (Chemers, 2001, Hoyt, 2005). Bandura (1997) defined the term self-efficacy as the "belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Chen & Blisse, 2002; Chemers, 2001; Hoyt 2005). Bandura (1986) observed that personal efficacy is the major basis for any behavioural action as he identified the four antecedents of personal or self-efficacy which are the previous performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social or verbal persuasion and physiological or psychological arousal (Taggar & Seijts, 2003).

Several researches in the past have shown how self-efficacy relates to various forms of performance outcomes. In a meta-analysis conducted by Stajkovic and Luthans (1998), their result showed that self-efficacy is strongly and positively associated with work-related performance. As such self-efficacy is found to be critical in not only influencing the skills an individual perceive or poses to have with regards to a particular domain, but it also influence what individuals think they can do with the skills they poses (Chemers, 2001; Hoyt 2005).

Thus many scholars and researchers alike are increasingly becoming interested in the identification of individual level of antecedents (Chen et al, 2002).

Interestingly however, out of all the studies Stajkovic and Luthans (1988a) considered in their meta analysis, none of the studies was found to have directly address leadership performance (McCormick 2002). Self-efficacy in a leadership situation, or leadership efficacy, simply refered to as one's overall belief in his or her general ability to lead (Murphy, 1992; Hoyt et al 2003). According to Paglis (2010), due to the lack of agreement or consensus in the literature, on the definition of leadership and how it looks like, it has made researchers to diverge in their approaches to studying LSE. She further argued that this has made it much more difficult for researchers to study LSE, leading to several researchers having their own definitions, but most of the researchers have given it a broad definition. Murphy (1992) saw LSE as one's perception regarding his or her general capabilities to lead. Kane (1999) defined LSE as "one's perceived self-capability to perform cognitive and behavioural functions required to effectively perform a specific leadership task". Hoyt (2005), considered leadership efficacy as an important domain which determines the organisational outcomes, individual and groups as it plays particular roles in especially stressful conditions. Bandura (1997) argued that self-efficacy in general is quite domain-specific, thus self-efficacy for leadership not generalised self-esteem, positive effect, or locus of control should relate to leadership effectiveness (Hoyt, 2005). This is in line with the argument presented by Paglis (2010) as she argued that due to the lack of agreement or consensus in the literature on the definition of leadership and how it looks like, it has made those researchers to diverge in their approaches to studying LSE. She also argued that this has made it much more difficult to study LSE; hence it's many broad definitions.

In a review of related literature on LSE, Hannah et al., (2008) observed that the concept of leadership efficacy has received relatively little attention in the leadership literature. At the same time, they argued that despite the call by Gist (1989) to apply this potent construct to leadership research, there exist limited theory building contributions that link efficacy to leaders, as they found only a small number of studies on leader efficacy (e.g. McCormick et al., 2002; Paglis & Green, 2002; Semadar et al., 2006; Singer, 1989, 1991; Jenkins, 1994; Ng et al., 2008; Hoyt, 2005 and Anderson et al., 2008). And with collective efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Watson et al., 2001; Hoyt, Murphy et al., 2003; Villanueva & Sanchez, 2007). This is somewhat surprising given that effective leadership requires high levels of agency and confidence (Hannah et al., 2008).

Directive Leadership Behaviour

Directive leadership is among the leadership styles that have recieved considerable attention in the past (see House et al 1996 for a review). It has had considerable attention from researchers in the past (e.g., House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974) this style of leadership as postulated by House (1971), got its roots from several resraches in the past. As reported by Liu, Lepak, Takeuchi, Sims (2003), this style of leadership got its root from the theory X management style (McGregor, 1960), initiating structure behaviors as articulated by the Ohio State studies (e.g., Fleishman, 1953; Schriesheim, House, & Kerr, 1976), task-oriented behavior from Michigan studies (e.g., Katz, Maccoby, & Morse, 1950) and punishment research (Arvey & Ivancevitch, 1980).

Directive leadership had been defined as the process giving command to others to do what the leader instructed or so wishes them to do (Sims & Manz, 1996; Liu, Lepak, Takeuchi, Sims, 2003). In this type of leadership style, leaders assign explicit goals and task to be carried out by the subordinates through the provision of specific guidance and requirements, articulation of the rules or rewards and punishment (House & Mitchell, 1974). The leader possess absolute authority by serving as the source of wisdom and direction to the followers by employing

some mechanisms which are basically on specific instruction and command, some assigned goals coupled with contingent reprimand or punishment in other as to encourage the appropriate task performance (Pearce et al., 2000;Liu et al 2003). Hence directive leadership emphasizes the style that commands power and little autonomy to employees as they serve or act as some tools for the leaders thoughts on the needed things to be done in other to accomplish the task. This type of leadership behavior had been found to coincide with contract employment mode as it gives emphasis on the need form of complying with the rules of the specified requirements of the job. Thus it is found not to have been a problem to especially workers that are on contractual agreement (Liu et al, 2003). they further observed that giving emphasis on compliance, specified job description and low level of commitment were found to be in consistence with the leadership demands and the contract employee group's expectations

Eagly and Johnson (1990) conducted a study by structuring around three different aspects of organizational (characters with management or leadership roles), laboratory experiments, and assessments. They compare democratic versus autocratic leadership styles, and task-relationship orientation. Their findings shows that men were found to use an autocratic style and were task-oriented unlike women who were found to be more of democratic leadership style with preference to interpersonal relationships and teamwork. It was found that many experts believe that in other to implemewnt BPR in today's organisations, there is need for top-down directive leadership style (Sutcliffe, 1999). Furhtwermore, it was found that those leaders that are successful in the implementation of BPR, uses those leadership styles that are found to have fit the type of the task at hand which needs to be done at the same time considering the needs of the people that are to performe the task.

In a related study, Lobato, Andreu, Cerrillo, Cerrillo, Maldonado, Gatell, Jauset, Gallardo, Asenjo (2010), in a survey, identified that eight out of 11 team leaders indicated a directive leadership tendency. Based on gender divergences, all the female leaders in the study showed tendency of the autocratic/directive leadership tendency as only half of the males were found to show the same tendency. The result indicated that the overall tendency towards directive leadership style, which differs from the results they expected in the survey, can be related to the consequence of the nature of the engineering degree.

METHODOLOGY

Research design Sample and procedures

In this study, a quantitative method of data collection was adopted with the use of questionnaire which was adapted from past studies. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents face-to-face. A total of 1000 sets of questionnaires (subordinate and self-rated) were distributed to a sample of branch managers and their subordinates in 24 commercial banks with a total population of 5118 bank branches. Out of the total questionnaires sent, 457 questionnaires were returned of which 434 questionnaires were considered suitable to be included in the analysis. About 23 questionnaires were in one way or the other considered not suitable to be included in the analysis as a result of many missing values and some were completed half way. The data were inserted into SPSS for Windows version 16. The analysis was started by first checking the possibility of missing values. The first test conducted was the checking for possible outliers among the responses. In this case, 21 outliers were found and deleted from the analysis. This left the analysis with 413 cases to be considered for analysis. Exploratory PCA was utilized to see the factorial validity of the measures. In the same vein, the reliability test of the measures was also conducted in order to see the internal consistency of the measures by computing the Cronbach Alpha. The hypotheses of the study were tested using the multiple regression.

VARIABLES AND MEASURES

In order for concepts to be measured, it had to be made operational; operational definition gives meaning by giving specific activity or operation that is necessary to measure (Zikmund, 2010). In this case, the operational definition of the concepts specifies what or how to measure the concept under investigation.

Self-Discipline LSE

Self-Discipline self-efficacy in this study is operationalised as efficacious managers believe in their ability to demonstrate emotional maturity and perseverance in the exercise of business. Leaders with Self-Discipline LSE hence believe in their ability to maintain composure and stability across a wide range of business situations. They are able to control their personal behavior in the workplace and always try to.

Involve LSE

In this study, involve LSE is operationalised as self-efficacious managers with the ability to interact with co-workers and subordinates in ways that respect their views and ideas. They are participative in nature and distributive of authority. Managers high in involve LSE hence are individuals who believe in their ability to authorize others to assume work responsibilities; they bring to the attention of others relevant information, involve subordinates in the business decision-making and consider different perspectives about people, business issues, or problems.

Serve LSE

Serve LSE is operationalised as managers having belief in their ability to set aside ego and pretence for the greater good of the organization. Hence, leaders who have the efficacy to serve put the larger interests of the organization ahead of personal needs; they admit errors and share credit. They behave adaptively as circumstances at work evolve and at the same time, are the types of people that appreciate the value in human differences. Acknowledging and appreciating the value of a wide range of human differences, behaving adaptively in the face of evolving circumstances at work, admitting mistakes, oversights and sharing credit with others, putting the larger interests of the organization ahead of personal needs or desires and deciding fairly on courses of action and evaluating others without personal bias.

Challenge LSE

Challenge LSE is operationalised in this study as managers high in efficacious ability to set and realize tough performance standards. Managers who are high in challenge LSE believe in their ability to establish specific, challenging, and attainable performance targets by setting higher standards of performance. They are good in getting results by realizing business objectives and always assess progress toward goals and objectives, expecting and communicating the need for high standards of performance for oneself and for others, establishing specific, challenging and attainable performance targets and showing the ability to get results by bringing business objectives into being

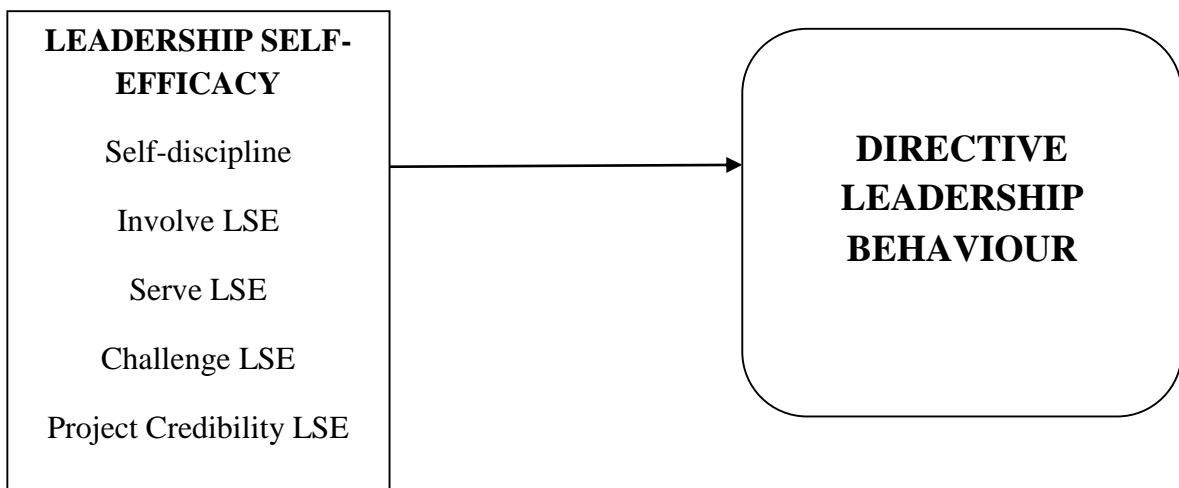
Project Credibility LSE

Project credibility LSE in this study is operationalised as managers high in efficacy believe in their ability to be fair and just and also to appear honest and believable to others. Hence manager's ability to be efficacious in project credibility will normally act consistently and in accordance with principles, values, and business ethics of the organization. They create positive first impression through demeanor and appearance and act in a way that fosters trust by following through on commitments.

Directional Leadership Behavior

Directive leadership in this study is operationalised as the leaders who exhibit a sense of emphasis on the issue of planning and the execution of task, evaluation of the work behavior with subordinates and others. Managers displaying directive leadership are therefore regarded as those leaders with a sense of goal and task orientation by playing their managerial role based on close supervision (Anderson et al., 2008). Hence, directive leadership emphasizes the style that commands power and little autonomy to employees as they serve or act as instruments of the leader's thoughts on what should be done to accomplish the task. This type of leadership had been found to be suitable with contract employment mode as it emphasis on compliance and specified job requirements, thus, it may not be problematic for workers in contractual employment arrangements (Liu et al., 2003). Task-oriented behaviors are used to improve productivity and reduce costs by eliminating unnecessary activities, duplication of effort, wasted resources, errors, and accidents (Yukl, 2008; Anderson et al., 2008).

Conceptual Frameworks



RESULT: Factor analysis: the result/output of the factor analysis on LSE shows that the KMO (measure of Sampling Adequacy) of the items value is .748. These result shows that the items are interrelated and they share common factors; thus they exceed the required benchmark of .60. This shows the sample size is adequate for factor analysis. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity of the items was found to be significant as it recorded a significant value of Approx Chi-Square of 2366 and $P < .000$. This indicates the significance of the correlation matrix thereby showing appropriateness for factor analysis to be conducted. The measure of sampling adequacy value ranges from, .65 to .86, which indicates the data matrix is found suitable to be factor analyzed as the communalities result after deleting four items showing the value range from .51 to .71. Hence, this value is of good measure, while the measure of sampling adequacy also shows the value to be 60.321. The scree plot and the rotated component matrix with varimax rotated analysis show the presence of five factors that are significant as their Eigen values are greater than one. The scree plot also supported the five factors. These factors include self-discipline LSE, involve LSE, serve LSE, perceived credibility LSE and challenge LSE.

The first factor which is labeled Project credibility has five items. It has an Eigen value of 3.353 with its factor loadings on the five measures showing .704, .713, .718, .801 and .812 respectively, thus accounting for 16.767 of the total variance in the data. The second factor has a total number of four items. This factor is labeled as Challenge LSE. In this case, it has an Eigen value of 2.462 with factor loadings of the four items showing .747, .747, .799 and .808 respectively. It accounts for 12.31% of the total variance. The third factor conducted in this analysis is Serve LSE. It has four items to measure and the result shows that it has an Eigen value of 2.256 and contributes 11.281% of the total variance. The factor loading of the four items ranges from .716, .761, .767 and .832 respectively. The next factor is labeled as Involve LSE. The factor has an Eigen value of 2.020 and contributes 10.099% of the total variance. This factor also has four measures and factor loadings that range from .711, .714, .747 to .802. Its original name Involve LSE is also retained.

The next factor in this test was the Self-discipline LSE. This factor initially had four items but one item was deleted, thereby leaving it with three items to measure the factor. It has an Eigen value of 1.973 and contributed 9.864% of the total variance. The factor loading of this factor ranges from .798, .813 to .840 and its original name is also retained. Directional leadership behavior has five measure items to measure it and all of them prove to be significant and appropriate as no item was deleted. It has an Eigen value of 3.462 and contributes 26.629% of the total variance in the data as its factor loading shows the value of .748, .773, .785, .809 and .814. This factor measures the respondent's perception on their ability to exhibit a sense of emphasis on the issue of planning and execution task and evaluation of work behavior of subordinates and others. Thus, managers high in this behavior are regarded as having high regard for goal and are task oriented based on close supervision. They regulate and scrutinize the work of others.

Reliability Test

After the factor analysis, the next analysis that was conducted was the reliability test based on the dimensions and construct under study. The reliability test was conducted on the independent variable (LSE) and the dependent variable (effective leadership behavior). The reliability of each of the dimensions was tested to find the Cronbach alpha value of the factors. Hair et al. (2010) posited that a lower limit of Cronbach Alpha value can reduce to .60 and is considered acceptable and reliable for exploratory research. The result of the reliability

test conducted, and all the measures recorded values above .60. This shows that the scales of the measures are reliable to be considered for further analysis.

The dimensions of the independent variable shows that self-discipline LSE has a value (.76), involve (.73), serve (.78), project credibility (.81) and challenge LSE (.78) and the overall LSE shows a reliability of (.64). This shows that the Cronbach Alpha value ranges within .64 to .81. These values have met the required minimum value needed as suggested by scholars (Nunally, 1978; Flynn, Schroeder, & Sakakibara, 1994; Hair et al., 2010).

The result further shows that the overall Cronbach Alpha value of directional leadership behavior (dependent variable) shows a Cronbach Alpha value of (.85), This also meets the required Cronbach Alpha value as suggested by scholars (Nunally, 1978; Flynn, et al., 1994; Hair et al., 2010).

Regression analysis

Directional leadership behavior was regressed on LSE based on the hypothesis of all dimensions of leadership self-efficacy significantly influence directional leadership. The result shows that LSE explains 11.1% of the model ($R^2 = .122$, F-Change= 11.263, $p < .01$). Among the dimensions of LSE, only Project credibility contributes in explaining directive leadership behavior with a beta value of $\beta = .343$, $p < .01$. Other dimensions of LSE, i.e. Self-discipline LSE, Involve LSE, Serve and Challenge LSE were found not have influenced or contributed to directional leadership. Therefore, hypothesis H2e is supported while hypotheses H2a, H2b, H2c and H2d are rejected.

Discussion

This result of this study is in concord with McCormick et al. (2002), Chan and Drasgow (2001) and Hendricks and Payne (2007) on individuals' attempts/motivation to lead. Furthermore, Murphy and Ensher (1999) found that LSE relates to leaders' own ratings of leader-member exchange. The result of Kane et al. (2002) shows that LSE related significantly to leader goal level, leader strategies and functional leadership behaviors. Subsequently, Paglis and Green (2002) found support for leader behaviors of setting a direction, gaining commitment to change goals and overcoming obstacles to change. Consequently however, four of the dimensions of LSE were not significantly related to their corresponding directional leadership behavior. This can be explained by the nature of the result of Anderson et al. (2008). This result however contradicts the findings of Anderson et al. (2008) as most of the significant relationship recorded in this study is not in concord with their result. However, this can be explained by the approach of the two studies conducted. Anderson et al. (2008) used a sample from a single institution i.e. drawn from international financial services company, thus it may likely be due the fact that this study uses a sample that cuts across different banks. Another possibility is that, both this study and that of Anderson et al. (2008) uses the financial services sector, hence it may likely be due to the use of a single sector.

The result of this study has proved many assumptions and contributions of past studies that have in the past shown how leadership self-efficacy predicts effective outcomes (Hoyt et al., 2003; Chemers et al., 2000; Watson et al., 1996; Murphy, 2001). Basically, Murphy (1992) sees self-efficacy in a leadership situation as one's overall belief in his/her general ability to lead. Self-efficacy in a leadership situation, or leadership efficacy, simply referred to as one's overall belief in his or her general ability to lead (Murphy, 1992; Hoyt et al., 2003). Hoyt (2005), considered leadership efficacy as an important domain which determines the organizational outcomes, individual and groups as it plays particular role in especially stressful conditions. Bandura (1997) argued that self-efficacy in general is quite domain-

specific, thus self-efficacy for leadership not generalized self-esteem, positive effect, or locus of control should relate to effective leadership (Hoyt, 2005). In furtherance, Giesner et al. (2009) observed that due to impact leaders have in their organizations, their contribution is undoubtedly great as their ability or actions will to a large extent lead to their performance, thus based on their central position in the group, performance is often attributed to their contribution. Furthermore, Hannah et al. (2008) postulated that effective leadership requires high levels of agency and confidence. Based on the result of this study, it can be said that for the organizational leaders, there is need for level of agency and confidence as it shows that there is significant relationship between leadership self-efficacy and directional leadership. Given the above theoretical assumptions, it can be said that the leadership self-efficacy is highly considered by the managers as an ingredient to their leadership behavior. The result of this study is a testimony to the manager's willingness and ability to lead. The overall belief and general ability to lead shown by the respondents of this study will in turn lead not only lead to their performance, but the organizational survival as well. Self-efficacy plays a vital role in stressful conditions; however, given the situations leaders in various organizations found themselves, this result had highlighted the need for leadership efficacy in leadership situations.

Conclusion

The research objective of this study shows LSE (project credibility) and directional leadership association was found to be significant. Based on the foregoing findings, it can be concluded that the leadership self-efficacy significantly influence the directional leadership behavior of the managers. The leadership self-efficacy based on its dimensions shows that project credibility LSE significantly influences directive leadership. Thus it is concluded that managers high in project credibility LSE are found to be task oriented.

Additionally, the conceptual model of this research was designed based on the extant relevant literature reviewed. This covers the variables considered in this study i.e. leadership self-efficacy and directional leadership behavior. This is arrived at based on the recommendations for future research to conduct a study on the said objectives highlighted above. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the research questions and the objectives of this study were answered. Furthermore, it can be concluded that the conceptual model is in line with the underpinning theory i.e. self-efficacy theory used to explain the framework of this study. Hence the empirical findings justify the underpinning theory employed.

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